

REMARKS

Claims 20, 22, 24, 25, 27, 33, 36, 38 – 44, 46, and 48-54 are now pending in the application. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 3, 5, 6, 17, 19, 21, 34, 45 and 47 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Minoura (U.S. Pat. No. 6,433,847 B1) in view of Abe et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,104,460). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 3, 5, 6, 17, 19, 21, 34, 45, and 47 are cancelled. This rejection, therefore, is moot.

Claims 23, 32 and 35 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Minoura (U.S. Pat. No. 6,433,847 B1). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 23, 32, and 35 are cancelled. As such, this rejection is moot.

Claims 13, 18, 26 and 37 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Molsen (U.S. Pat. No. 6,573,959 B1) in view of Minoura (U.S. Pat. No. 6,433,847 B1). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 13, 18, 26, and 37 are cancelled. This rejection, therefore, is moot.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is respectfully requested.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Claims 20, 22, 24, 25, 27, 33, 36, 38 – 44, 46 and 48 are allowed. Applicants acknowledge, with thanks, the allowance of these claims.

NEW CLAIMS

New claims 49-54 have been added. These new claims are supported throughout the specification and drawings as originally filed. No new matter has been added. Further, these new claims are dependent on allowed independent claims 20, 22, 24, 25, 27, and 46. Since these claims depend from an allowed independent base claim, Applicants respectfully assert that the subject matter of these new claims does not raise a new issue that requires further consideration and/or search and, therefore, are in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration of these new claims is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

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GGs/BEW/JAH

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